

# THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

EDITED BY GEORGE HOUSTON.

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VOL. 4

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### WATSON REFUTED.

The following admirable letters were first published at Edinburgh in the year 1796. They are the production of the author of the "*Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables*," which appeared in the early numbers of the *Correspondent*; and were intended as a refutation of the bishop of Llandaff's *Apology for the Bible*. In the advertisement, prefixed to the letters, the writer says, "I hope, in the following sheets to show, that the learned Professor of Divinity has committed errors in the Natural Sciences and History, which would be inexcusable in any author; but when coming from a dignified Clergyman, who wishes to dictate to the nation, their detection cannot fail to shew the public, how necessary it is for men to employ their faculty of reason, and not yield it to those whose profession is to teach things they acknowledge to be above reason, and incomprehensible. I shall, as soon as my other avocations permit, give the world a tract upon religion in general, with strictures on the Jewish and Christian systems. For this reason, I shall not, in the present pamphlet, enter deeply into any abstract reasoning, but confine myself chiefly to the detection of the errors contained in the *Apology of the Bible*."

Owing to the coercive measures adopted in England, by the priesthood, to suppress all works having a tendency to enlighten the public, on the subject of religion, the "tract," alluded to by the author of the refutation, although completed, was prevented from appearing, and the MS. subsequently lost or mislaid. As the Essays we have already published, and the letters we now commence, may be regarded as containing the whole of his views on theology, the loss of the tract is, perhaps, not to be so much regretted. To us it appears that the letters of themselves contain a triumphant refutation of all the arguments of the "learned" bishop," and had their circulation not been impeded by priestly despotism, they would, long ere this, have dissipated the errors of the prevailing superstitions.

— *Ed. Correspondent.*

### LETTER I.

MY LORD—You have thought it not inconsistent with your dignity as a Bishop, to oppose the *Age of Reason* by *Thomas Paine*, and I, as a member of the community, find myself called upon to expose your

reasoning, and stop the career of error. You disclaim controversy ; but if your candour is any thing more than a vain boast, I entertain hopes of seeing the defender of Christianity again step forward to answer my arguments, if he deems them of sufficient weight to disturb his quiet. I am sincerely glad to find a dignified churchman begin a dispute with men, whom, formerly, the pious members of the Church would have deemed fit victims for the fire or the gallows ; at the same time, I feel deep regret that the Bishop has not yet altogether laid aside the clerical passion for the extermination of the heterodox. I hope, says Dr. Watson, that there is no want of charity in wishing, that Mr. Paine's life had been terminated long before his publication. This may be consistent with Christian charity, but nature and reason teach us ugly unbelievers another doctrine ; and, however inveterate I may be against those of the clergy who persecute and deceive the multitude, I confess, that the death of a person, whom I conceive to be acting for what he thinks the public good, would give me no pleasure ; and the Bishop allows the purity of Mr. Paine's motives. The wish of the philosopher is, let reason guide us, and all parties have freedom of debate. No dogmatical dictates of bigoted priests, no passive obedience to the mandates of inquisitors, nor to the persecutions so often fomented by churchmen. To the progress of letters, during this century, we owe the mildness and condescension of clergymen ; till philosophy taught us, the clergy never discovered, that persecutions for heresy, and witchcraft, or inquisitions and popery, were horrid institutions. Dares Dr. Watson affirm, that freedom of inquiry was ever suffered on religious subjects ? that people were allowed to examine the grounds of the doctrines taught by the church ? No, Sir, your predecessors of all beliefs have ever persecuted philosophers and inquirers into truth, both in science and in religion. Neither Galileus or Rousseau escaped the malevolence of the opposers of science ; and in the Bible they found authorities for their inveterate opposition to the progress of truth and knowledge. The New Testament informs us, that the wisdom of God is foolishness to man, that human learning produces nothing but pride,\* and that the poor in spirit gain the kingdom of heaven. Under these and other similar pretences, have barbarous priests led their credulous followers to massacre in the name of their God ; by means of that touchstone word, *Faith*, they made the multitude forget that their leaders were but men. Now, Sir, we have grown bolder : knowledge being no longer confined to clerical seminaries, priests are not kings. The church totters ; and a single pamphlet, you say, "has unsettled the faith of thousands." Now, that you cannot stifle reason, you pretend to liberality of sentiment.

The natural historian, or the astronomer, fears not the publication of

\* "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Colos. ii. 5, 8.

"Cum sit nobis divinis literis traditum cognitiones philosophorum stultas esse, ad ipsum re et argumentis docendum est ; ne quis honesto sapientiæ nomine inductus, aut inanis eloquentiæ splendore deceptus, humanis malet quam divinis credere."

Lactantius, Inst. lib. i. chap. 2.

opinions contrary to his own,\* except from a scholastic habit, learned in the clerical seminaries, which still disgrace almost every country. The chemist eagerly pursues all theories; the divine alone refuses to argue with his opponents, and trembles at the very name of reason. I differ in my philosophical opinions from Mr. Paine; my principles extend so much farther than his, that I suspect I come under the class which you are pleased to call madmen, and every clergyman would affect to despise, but dare not argue with, before an unprejudiced tribunal. These, Sir, are the effects of superstition, and the cunning policy of the Church. The Bible is hardly suffered to be read in Catholic countries. The English reformers could not go so far; their revolution sprung from a dawn of philosophy. The English clergy, however, would confine us to the reading of that untelligible farrago, and the still more insufferable commentaries upon it. So did the scholastics with Aristotle; their bigoted partiality to this author was nearly of the same force with the priestly attachment to the Bible. They retard science; but the motives of the clergy are stronger. By the Bible they live; and it is not uncommon to hear the parson deride in private what he preaches from the pulpit.

But to your first letter.

After the pious wish for Thomas Paine's death, you proceed to state how miserable the adoption of his doctrines would render the "unhappy virtuous." Fear not such a dire event: the *pious* are few in number, and of those, few have the courage to open a book controverting their opinions, and which, they are taught to believe, contains nothing but blasphemies. But, should chance lead them to a detection of their errors, they would only become less devout, and more useful citizens. Freed from the prospect of hell and heaven, they will have leisure to think of this world, in which they live somewhat like hermits, loving only their priests, and ready to sacrifice victims to credulity.

You say, that guillotine massacres were not the effect of the Popish religion, but of the disbelief of this system. This deserves some consideration. It is not true, that the majority of the people of Paris were unbelievers. No, Sir, they swore to the miracles of Abbe Paris, and were as ready to give testimony to the wonderful cures and prodigies operated by his intercession, as the Jews and Christians have been to vouch for theirs. The fact is this; the lively disposition of the French, the unintelligibility of their religion, and the shameful conduct of the priests, turned their attention to the more serious object of politics: but this event could not immediately change the nature of the murderers of the Protestants on St. Bartholomew's day. Does your Lordship imagine that the peasants of La Vendee are models of morality? If you think so, I must undeceive you. Nothing but ignorance prevails in that district; like the ancient crusaders, they are led solely by their priests, who, by means of certain words which early habits and superstition have made their followers respect, and, together with want of communication with the rest of France, have inflamed them, and driven them to slaughter: even miracles have not been wanting in that part of the country; but in this, as in many other instances, they have disappeared, on the arrival of incredulous troops, whose hearts are perhaps hardened by God like the Egyptians of old. Since God diminishes men's faith in pro-

portion as he gives them human wisdom, let us not endeavor to convert this heavenly will, by endeavouring to make the enlightened people of the 18th century so credulous as in the former days of ignorance.

The Bishop allows, that the higher classes of every country all lean towards infidelity; they are more guided by reason, and reason is the avowed enemy of faith, it being the criterion of faith that it contains natural impossibilities. It is unfortunate that so many sects pretend to faith, and differ so much among themselves; and that to explain their faiths, they use the weapons of reason against one another. This of itself proves, that faith is but a cant word, since the faithful argue about what come not under human knowledge. Thus all religious sectaries, whether Christians, Jews, Mahometans, Boodzoists, or Bramins, as staunchly believe contradictory doctrines, while, in the inquiries that depend on their reason, we find that, wherever men have long been civilized, they have, in astronomy, in physics, or ethics, come in general to the same conclusions.

The language of the philosopher is understood as well in Pekin as in Rome; but the religious fanatics of every country differ in their opinions, and consider all but themselves as dreamers and imposters. The Bramin laughs at the story of Noah and the ark, the stopping of the sun, and the incarnation of God; while the Christian shews the same contempt for the incarnation of Vishnu, and other articles of the Braminical faith. The exercise of reason alone shews us the true limits of our intellectual faculties. Ignorance of this is the cause of all reveries in science, as in religion; it is only superstition that incites men to launch beyond their conceptions.

You accuse of infidelity all those who commit crimes against society. When we answer, that the Jewish and Christian religions have deluged the world with blood, you reply, that it is not as being Jews and Christians, but because they were wicked. At the same time, I hope you allow, that the Spartans, the Athenians, the Romans, the Chinese, did not commit half the atrocities which disgrace Jewish history, the æra of the Crusades and the Christian persecutions, of the invasion of America, the massacres of heretics, &c. The candid observer must therefore conclude, that right and wrong is not confined to sects; that the Christian religion, whatever its precepts may be, has not been able to prevent crimes, while nations who knew not so much as the name of Moses or Christ, produced a Confucius, an Aristides, a Socrates, an Epaminondas, a Cincinnatus. Among these nations, who knew not the Lord Jehovah, we find Archimedes, Epicurus, Demosthenes, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, while the chosen people of God, and their successors, the Christians, borrowed their language, the very names of their gods, and the little science they knew, from these despised infidels. It was not the oracle of Delphos, the augurs, or the sybils, that enlightened the Greeks and Romans. The rabble credited them, as the ignorant Jews and Christians did their prophets and apostles. In short, morals cannot be invented; they cannot be two systems of morality. The precepts must be directed to principles existing in the heart of man. Ignorance conceals from nations the rule of conduct, in the same manner that it prevents them from knowing geometry; the moment they study either,



they are put in the road of truth. No wonder, then, that in the times of the greatest oppression, when frightened into certain doctrines by the stories of nurses and parents, many learned men should not be able to conquer their first prejudices. You certainly know the time when astrology and the philosopher's stone were in fashion; the believers in these reveries were men of science. Van Helmont, Stahl, Boyle, and innumerable others were possessed of this madness. You can be no stranger to the numerous wretches that suffered from witchcraft and necromancy, and, upon the very brink of death, confessed they were guilty.

The next reflection the Doctor makes, is respecting gospel moderation, for which purpose he quotes, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." Yet has this been done by all Christian rulers; and the clergy are at this moment, in express defiance of this maxim, about to send missionaries to disseminate principles that have ever produced internal dissensions, and without which infidels have lived in perfect happiness. It is, perhaps, an excess of piety; but cool observers pretend, that it is the high priest, not the High God that they are going to preach: to fill their knapsacks is the first object of these pilgrims, and their God is made subservient. Unluckily for the Bishop, he could not adduce a more detestable maxim, to shew his charity, than that which I have just quoted: it is the pivot of Oriental despotism; it teaches passive obedience to all classes; the father is the tyrant of his children, the nabob of his subjects, the emperor of all: it is a maxim whose tendency is to root in men's minds that we are the property of one another, and may be inherited as cattle. To those of my readers who are pleased with it, I wish a thorough experience of its effects.

The remainder of your first letter contains observations to which I perfectly accede. Your conclusion against Thomas Paine is perfectly fair. Any apparent deviation from moral justice in the world must prove as much against the goodness of God, as a similar inconsistency in his immediate actions and commands proves against revealed religion. My Lord, we are in the abyss of error; your question with Thomas Paine is about the comparative absurdity of the two opinions. The Deistical notions of your adversary do not agree with his reasonable tenets; but I readily grant, that, to a religious person, nothing is incredible; and that the greater the inconsistencies, the more sublime the system. But let me ask your Lordship, what you conclude against one, who, like myself, is not a Deist? and repeats, with the first philosopher of the age, that there are only four possible hypotheses upon the causes of the universe: 1st. That they are purely good. 2dly. That they are malicious. 3dly. That they are a mixture of good and evil. And lastly, That they neither possess benevolence, nor any other passions. The two first hypotheses are equally contradicted by daily experience, the mixture of good and evil is too apparent; the third is denied by the steadiness of the laws of nature: the last, then, only is admissible.

You next proceed to justify several actions of the Jews, which you and the Bible are pleased to call God's commands. I must decline following your reasoning; for the very existence of such crimes as the

Jews ascribe to their enemies, and which, they say, were so repugnant to God, would of themselves prove against the goodness of that Being. His frequent threats, and the extermination of so many miserable nations, is a poor expedient; like that of a man, who, attempting to make a machine, and, foiled in his endeavors, gloried in breaking it in a thousand pieces. How much more ridiculous is that sublime Artificer, who employs the same means which impotence or malevolence give rise to in his wretched children. I am glad you have no recourse to the silly causes of atheism, as given by that illustrious dreamer, Plato. The world has too long been imposed upon by ridiculous attempts to vilify atheists, and shew their non-existence. That name has been a cant word, like Jacobin in France, and Whig and Tory in England, which every person applies to his neighbor, as it best suits him. In Catholic countries, all who dare think are heretics; among protestants, they are atheists. Being a word of opprobrium, it has ever been used as a powerful engine by the clergy. The question is upon the truth of systems, not upon the character of those who profess them. If this were the discrimination, and the palm given to that religion that has had the greatest number of honest men, the Christian system would certainly lose the contest.

The Bishop seems to think, that savages have not so perfect a notion of God as we imagine: religion, he supposes, being as it were in express revelation. This is but the fancy of a clergyman, unsupported by any proofs; but at least it shews, that the Bishop involuntarily acknowledges, that reason alone can hardly give us the idea of a ruling being. The savage, it is true, does not discourse in a metaphysical jargon; he wants expression: but I wish the Doctor would inform me in what our Catechism definition of God is clearer than the notions of the rudest savage, who, trembling at the approach of thunder and violent convulsions of nature, or enjoying the genial sun and fertilizing inundations, imagines all the world to be animated with his own passions. The thunder is a mark of wrath, while the blessings are signs of a propitious genius. To conciliate these imaginary beings, to avert their wrath is the grand object of superstition. Schoolmen conceal, under their mystical jargon, the real materials which their gods are made of; they conceal that the supreme artificer is the offspring of fancy, the figurative and unphilosophical symbol of nature, to which they give human dispositions: in all religious systems men are the type of their gods.

Your letter concludes with a remark sufficiently extraordinary, that most deists of your acquaintance disbelieve the mysterious conversations of God, his miracles, and such other stories, because they are too wonderful, and against the order of nature. Your reply is curious: because we never have seen the like of them, does it follow they are untrue? Give me leave to tell you, my Lord, that you have forgotten the rules of logic: you know, that in all cases, but of demonstration the philosopher does nothing but weigh probabilities. Any thing that is conceivable is possible: but are we therefore to believe in the existence of witches or necromancers? Are we to give credit to the world having sprung from an egg? That Mahomet divided the moon? That the sun stood still?

That astrology is a science? Yet what reason have we to disbelieve them? The respective supporters of these opinions may say with the Doctor, that nothing can be too wonderful, and that, because these things have not happened in our time, it does not follow they should be untrue. I acknowledge, with the Doctor, that many Deists admit a Being as inconceivable as any religious mystery; therefore it may seem ridiculous in them to stop their credulity; since we call God just, when nothing but a concatenation of causes and effects can be perceived in the world; when we proclaim him benevolent, while the world is full of vice, while millions perish in misery, and continual calamities befall mankind; while, in short, most men have the gloomy prospect of damnation before them. These are greater miracles than an universal deluge, making a woman from a rib, or Gods countenancing the atrocious murders of Jews. He that will believe one wonder, has no plea for doubting the rest. *see p. 97*

#### MORAL OBLIGATION.

MR. EDITOR—It will be readily admitted, that that kind of religion, or that system of morality is best, which most effectually teaches self-knowledge; And that the moral system which produces the strongest and most direct appeal to self-interest, for the correction of those errors and vices incident to our natures, must be best in their operation, and most salutary in their end; because every effort, under the guidance of such a system, extends a knowledge of those practical means which go in detail to make up the sum of all happiness, and of all good to man. That religion, on the contrary, which embodies all its force in terror and in mystery, and which acknowledges no natural cause for the attainment of moral excellence, and no natural effect in the punishment which falls upon moral delinquency, must be the worst kind of religion; and for this plain reason, among others, that it effects mainly the ignorant, the weak, and the timorous, who are consequently exposed to all that imposture from the teachers, (for such a code is fruitful of teachers,) as the corrupt designs of these may happen to dictate. Such a code always inculcates implicit belief or faith; and for this obvious reason, that it is incapable of standing against free investigation. Thus denying the human mind that free exercise, with regard to matter or mind, which is the sum and substance of all knowledge.

The unnatural, or revealed religion, enjoins upon its disciples to do, or to abstain, in certain cases, because God will be angry in the one event, and pleased in the other; while it is left with the teachers of such religion, to say and declare the whole council of God. What, therefore, in the scriptures of this God of theirs, is left doubtful, they explain to suit the case, and what may seem at first view very plain, they can, by the help of allegorical, or prophetic allusion, as easily alter to their own minds, or to suit their own immediate purposes. The natural system, on the contrary, of moral obligation, arising out of the invariable order of things, and the knowledge of this order, presents a check to bad actions, and an inducement to good ones, through the effects which either are calculated to produce on ourselves, our friends, or on the community.

Unnatural, or revealed religion, inculcates a repentance for transgression, involving in its doctrines] the forgiveness of an imaginary being, who through his ambassadors, the priests, has been made to accept of any atonement, however vile, degrading and absurd. The bible is full of these instances, and modern fanatics have still multiplied them; while the religion of natural morals, is more particular to recommend that efficient repentance, whose object and end is, satisfaction to the aggrieved, restitution to the spoiled, or a humble acknowledgement of error where such an acknowledgment is called for by the nature of the transgression.

It will not be thought surprizing, that they who believe in the repentance proffered to an imaginary being, or an acknowledgement made to such a being a matter of the first importance, should give but a secondary consideration to the more substantial restitution to the parties aggrieved, in the very multiplied instances of actual transgression to be met with in common life. The facility, also, of this kind of atonement, produces a less powerful check to the recurrence of transgression, than the requirements of that home-bred philosophy of morals, which, like a well digested system of laws, naturally grows out of the actual condition of the people. In the one case, scripture, with its varying and fickle light, marks out the atonement to *God*. In the other, common sense adapts the signs of repentance, and the atonement to be made to *men*, according to the actual time, and the actual situation of the parties concerned.

He who can pay for his transgressions by prayers, certainly comes off much easier than he whose conscience is occupied by, and can only be satisfied with, a more substantial medium of atonement.

Here it must be confessed, revealed religion has more to attract and allure than the more sober religion of common moral obligation. The most abandoned wretch that goes to the gallows, has only to lay hold of Christ in his devotions, as a full atonement for all his crimes, and he becomes entitled to all the merit due to virtue. The priest makes a fuss over him, and he goes out of the world a saint; distinguished only from the rest of the saints by having a rope round his neck.

There is a kind of par value, by which every thing in life is measured; and whether this standard be money or labor, or the signs of them, bread, and meat, and clothing, still there is a par value. And even in character, community is never without a standard. Now, if prayers are made a lawful tender, we may be sure that none but the very foolish and simple will be found to acknowledge any other medium. All would be found to offer prayers first, and if these answered, there would be found few indeed, who would offer any thing else. The Christian religion, viewed in this light, is a most delightful, promising and convenient religion; and infinitely above any thing which can be offered by the plain religion of moral obligation.

LOOKER ON.

Athens, August 20, 1828.



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**NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 30, 1828.**

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**LECTURE II,**

DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION,

*On the Origin of Man.*—By a Member.

In my last lecture I endeavored to show from facts, in the natural history of man, and other animals, that the whole human race was not derived from one common stock. That in the first place, from his structure, man could not be classed with any of the other animals. That the construction of his digestive organs separating him from belonging to either the class carnivorous, or those who live on flesh, or the herbivorous, or the eaters of vegetables exclusively, but that he is calculated for both, or either mode of living, as circumstances require. I thought it superfluous to show that he could not be derived from either insects, birds, or fishes, although the visionary theory has been maintained, that he might be traced in his origin to the latter, and that he was no more than a fish out of water. But as this hypothesis is principally founded upon the fabulous stories of mermen and mermaids, who now can be said scarcely to possess more advocates than those of ghosts, hobgoblins, and witches, and much of the same class, it is not worth our while to examine the question.

I also endeavored to show, that the varieties of the human species go to prove, that they could not be derived from the same stock, the same Adam and Eve; and for this purpose I collated two of those varieties, the white and the black race, the appearances and qualities of which, differ so strongly, as to show that they are not of the same race *now*. And that the differences cannot be derived from the effects of climate, soil, governments, or any other local circumstances, the facts I offered, I think prove,—although it has been strongly maintained that the fact of their cohabiting together, shows them to belong to the same species, and derived from the same stock.

It now remains to examine the other varieties of the human race, after which we may be better able to discuss the effects circumstances may have had in causing those varieties, and what weight is to be attributed to the fact of mutual cohabitation in proving them to be all from one origin. After which we may examine the doctrine of molecules, and the subject of animal and mineral life, from which some conclusions have been drawn respecting the origin of man.

I will now mention, however, that there are found occasionally, among all people, some individuals, called albinos, whose peculiarities, from their being often found in the African race, has given them the name of white negroes; the light flaxen hair, the red tremulous eyes, the milky whiteness of the skin, show an entire deficiency of the coloring principle in those parts. The inconvenience from light, derived from this deficiency of the eye, induced the Dutch to give them the name of cockroaches, as they prefer night to day. Mr. Jefferson has mentioned a number of cases, as well as many other writers. They are fre-

quently the offspring of entire black parents. But from their being found in all parts of the globe, from only occurring occasionally, and the peculiarity never being continued, I look upon them as only an accidental circumstance in nature—a species of monstrosity, and not a distinct race, as I would regard any other occasional variation among individuals, as a superabundance of fingers and toes, red spots or even diseases.

The other varieties of the human race, besides those mentioned—viz: the Caucasian, so named, because the most perfect of that formation are found around Mount Caucasus, and the Negro, or African, are supposed to be three, which fill up the intermediate space between these two extremes.

They are the Mongolian—the American—and the Malay. The particulars in which these varieties, or if you please, species, for I am inclined to consider them as species, differ from each other, is an interesting subject of examination and enquiry.

1st. The Mongolian race, comprehends those nations spread over the north, east and middle of Asia, the northern part of America, and of Europe. As the Monguls, Calmucks, Cossacks, Burats, Kamskatkans, Chinese, Japanese, but not the Tartars in Asia, the Fins and Laplanders in Europe, the Esquimaux Indians, the Greenlanders in America.

The characteristics of this variety, are—short stature, olive colored skin, coarse straight black hair, little or no beards, broad faces, high cheek bones, flat nose, eyes oblique towards the nose, cruel, inhuman, and warlike; with the latter qualities they spread dismay, desolation, and ruin, when united under those celebrated leaders, Attila, Zenghis Khan and Tamerlane; the former penetrated into the heart of Europe with his Huns, who were of this race, in 447 of this æra, but could not retain their conquests, and were exterminated. In 1200, the same race, but called Tartars, spread their ravages through Asia, and subdued the Saracen Empire. Tamerlane, 200 years after, overrun with his hordes of Monguls, Asia and India. Thus these three, like the deluge, the tornado, and hurricane, involved every thing in one sweeping ruin.

2d, The American variety. The nations composing this variety, who are fast receding before the combined avarice, religious fanaticism, and superior intellect of the white species, and who probably before another century has passed, will have become extinct, have certain peculiarities, which distinguish them from the Mongolian, although possessing the same black, straight, lank hair, the same deficiency of beard and hair in other parts of the body, the same black iris of the eye, the same broad face, and high cheek bones. Yet the greater fullness and roundness of the eyes, their face more rotund, and not so flat the nose projecting more, the mouth large, with thick lips, the forehead low, and sometimes made more so by art, sufficiently distinguish them. The chin is not pointed as in the Mongolian variety, and the cheeks fuller. The color varies very much from a brown to a red or copper-color; some are quite light: the Peruvians, for instance, are of a pale dull cast. In Chili, it is said, some have been found quite white and red.

This species extends, or rather have extended, for now they have nearly melted away before the superiority of the white man, from the arctic circle nearly to the antartic, thus extending through almost every latitude, and comprehending a great variety of region, which is an evidence that however the circumstances of climate may modify in a degree, they do not change the species. The copper-colored and black haired race are the same in the frozen regions of Hudson's Bay, and on the banks of Colombia, except being rather lighter, while the circumstance of being nearer the tropic, ought to make them darker.

The Malay variety seems to be more uncertain in its character than any of the others, and comprehends many tribes and nations, who differ much in almost every thing except language. Their color is from tawny to black; black hair, curling in ringlets, and plentiful; head narrow, face rather large and prominent, nose broad but not flat, and large mouth; eyes black.

It is intended to comprehend all the inhabitants of the East India islands, and the islands of the South seas, including the peninsula of Malacca, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, the Celebs, the Moluccas, Ladrões, Philippines, Carolines, Societies, &c, even to New Zealand, New Holland, and New Guinee.

That all the inhabitants of all these islands are not of the Malay variety is well known. The larger isles have two distinct breeds; those inhabiting the interior or mountaneous parts are of the Negro formation; they appear to have been driven there by the Malays, who inhabit the coast, and who are the entire occupants of some of the smaller islands. Whether all the other inhabitants of the islands which are spread over the Pacific Ocean can with propriety be classed with the Malay admits yet of a doubt. I think not. Some appear to approach the Caucasian character; these are the inhabitants of the Sandwich, the Society, the Friendly and the Marqueses. "The fine forms, the uncommon symmetry, the great strength and activity of many tribes in the South Sea islands, have been noticed by all who have had intercourse with them."

[*Lawrence.*

One individual is mentioned who lived on one of the Marquesa islands, who measured 6 feet 7 or 8 inches, with figure and strength in proportion. He is said to have sprung from the mainmast of a European ship, into the sea, for sport, several times, and would have done the same from the top gallery, but was prevented. The Otaheitan are fat and unwieldy, and those of Easter Island lean and meagre.

To be Concluded in our next.

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

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### A WELL AUTHENTICATED ANECDOTE.

The inhabitants of Neufchatel petitioned the King of Prussia, Fredrick the Great, to banish a certain clergyman from their town, for preaching from the pulpit, that the Hell mentioned in scripture, was no other than self condemning remorse of conscience; and not an everlasting flame of fire and brimstone. Fredrick, at that time very much

engaged with restoring the condition of many of his towns, which had suffered by the ravages of war, did not, with his wonted promptitude, answer this petition of his pious subjects of Neufchatel. Not, however, to be thus put off, and determined not to sit any longer, if possible, under the soul chilling doctrine of a Hell without fire, the good people of Neufchatel petitioned again, urging their sovereign to send them a preacher who should restore the old hell with all its terrors. Soon afterwards, it happened that Fredrick was sending to that town some directions about the magistracy, and thinking of the petition, said to his secretary, "and as for the petition which has been so often laid before me, by these pious people, since they will have it so, let them be everlastingly damned their own way."

L. O.

*Purgatory.*—It is evident that the Roman Catholics are indebted to Plato for their Purgatory. That great Philosopher divided souls into three classes; the pure the curable and the incurable. The first returned by refusion, to the universal soul of the world, or the divinity, from which they had emanated; the second went to hell, where they passed in review every year before the judges of that dark empire, who suffered them to return to light when they had sufficiently expiated their faults; the incurables remained in Tartarus, where they were to suffer eternal torment. Plato, as well as Christian casuists, described the crimes, faults, &c. which merit those different degrees of punishment. Protestant Divines, jealous probably of the riches of the catholic clergy, have imprudently rejected the doctrine of a purgatory, whereby they have much diminished their own credit. It would perhaps, have been wiser to have rejected the doctrine of a hell, whence souls can never be released, than that of purgatory, which is more reasonable, and from which the Clergy can deliver souls by means of that all-powerful agent, *Money*.

*Bible versus Bible.*—In the 24th Chapter 2 Samuel, and the 21st Chapter 1 Chronicles, we find a sufficient agreement in the statement to convince us that they both originated from the same tale; but whether this tale were a fact or a fable we shall not pretend to determine.

Both accounts inform us that David caused the people of Israel and Judah to be numbered from Dan to Bers-sheba; both of them say that Joab remonstrated with David, to show him the sinfulness of doing so; and both of them agree that David was instigated to commit this wicked act. We have likewise this two-fold authority to state, that immediately after the people were numbered, David knew that he had sinned; that three calamities were offered him; that pestilence (in the shape of an angel) was sent which destroyed seventy thousand innocent men, and that both the Lord and David repented of what they had done. A threshing floor is bought an altar is reared,—burnt offerings are offered up, and the plague is stayed.

What a sublime piece of information! If such a tale were told as having been done in our own days, we would scarcely find an American credulous enough to believe it.

But if the agreement of these wonderful books stagger our weak faith, what is to become of us when we view their contradictions? One



book tells us it was the Lord that moved David to number the people, the other book says it was Satan, both books cannot be the word of God. Which way will the priests have it? Samuel tells us one of the calamities offered to David was seven years famine, and Chronicles says it was three years famine. One book tells us there were in Israel 800,000 men that drew the sword, and the other book tells us there were 1,100,000; the former says there were 500,000 men in Judah, and the latter that there were 470,000; one of them says that David gave fifty shekels of silver for the threshing floor and the oxen, the other says that he gave six hundred shekles of gold for them.

Is it certain that both these books are the word of God? Perhaps the Devil has busied himself with inspiring the sacred writer of the book of Chronicles, while God was inspiring the holy Samuel. This supposition is at least probable, as the honor of having provoked David to number the people is claimed by each of them. These Molochs had then their nostrils regaled by the roasting of bullocks or according to inspired language, by burnt offerings, and the plague was stayed from Israel. These are the tales that form the basis of our morality, and they are preached in the 19th century, to a people that think themselves free, rational, and intelligent beings.

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*Praying Machines.*—"It is well known that a Romish priest must say his breviary five times a-day. Among other stories, which are told of Jesuitical casuistry, it is said, that the sons of St. Ignatious invented a convenient method of complying with the injunctions of the Church. At the canonical hour, the Jesuit repeats the alphabet from A to Z, to which he adds a short collect, in which he begs that the Christ-Cross-row may be taken as an equivalent for all the prayers which can be made out of the combination and repetition of the letters. The Calmucks have displayed still greater ingenuity. We, Europeans, pride ourselves upon the superiority which we have attained by substituting machinery for human labour. We think we have accomplished miracles, by employing "the strong arm of unconquered steam" in twirling the spindle, and in setting the wool-card in motion. The followers of the Grand Lama have done more; they have invented praying-jennies, which do the business in perfection. It is a doctrine amongst them, and it is so convenient to saints and sinners, that no Calmuck, whether free-thinker or devotee, has ever ventured to call it in question, that, as often as the paper or other substance upon which a prayer is written, is set in motion, this movement of the written prayer is as meritorious as its oral repetition. The Kurada or praying-machine is therefore constructed upon this principle. It consists of two cylinders or drums, filled withinside with rolls of paper, written in the Tangotian or sacred language. The drums are hung in a neat frame, and are kept on the whirl with great facility by the simple contrivance of a string and crank: and every turn of the cylinder is perfectly equivalent to the repetition of all the prayers contained in it. The turning of the Kurada is an agreeable pastime, in the long evenings of winter; but Tartar ingenuity has discovered a method of dispensing even with the slight degree of exertion which this compendious substitute requires. We make "swift trochais" turn our

meat, they employ the smoke-jack to say their prayers for them; and the Kurada which spins over the fire in the midst of the hut, transfers all its merit to the owner."

"The Mongols are yet more wisely economical of individual responsibility and labor. Amongst them the inhabitants of a district construct a Kurada, at their joint expense, which is placed in a mill-house by the side of a running stream. And this subscription Kurada is made so large, that it holds prayers enough to serve for all the parish; and, consequently, except in seasons of uncommon draught, when the water is too low to turn the mill, which grinds the prayers for the parishioners, they are completely exonerated from the obligation of wasting their time in the Churule or Temple. The Kimorin is another dumb substitute for devotion of the same nature. It is a flag upon which the air-horse or Kimorin is painted, together with an appropriate selection from the Calmuck ritual. Such were the consecrated ensigns seen by Dr. Clark. As long as the Kimorin flutters in the wind the inhabitants of the tent upon which it is hoisted are making their way to Heaven by help of the air-horse."

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*Fanaticism* is the growth of all ages and all places—in Bern Switzerland, a woman whose son was named Isaac, and her husband Abraham took it into her head that she was under the obligation to sacrifice her son for the expiation of her sins; and actually performed the sacrifice upon her toilet, which she converted into a kind of an altar: persuading her husband that it was a good and laudable act. They have both been taken up and imprisoned—and excepting their fanaticism appear to be in their right senses.

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*Fallen Angels.*—If the extraordinary nature of the doctrine of fallen Angels, the wonderful part those apostate spirits are supposed to act in the moral world, the distinguished figure they make in the popular systems of christianity, and that Christ is supposed to be chiefly employed in combating with, and counteracting the plans of their imaginary chief, the Devil, be considered, it will be reasonable to expect, unless these things be fabulous, a clear and explicit account in divine revelation of their fall; for it is impossible we should know any thing about it but by divine revelation; and when we observe the silence of scripture on the subject, it is enough to destroy our belief of the doctrine. Those who maintain it, suppose that the apostacy of the Angels took place prior to the fall of man; the latter event, they ascribed to the influence of the chief of the apostate spirits. Had this really been the case, we might have expected Moses to have made some mention, when speaking of the fall of man, of the prior apostacy of the seducer of our first parents. He, however and all the Prophets, are silent on the subject: this is the more surprising, as fallen Angels are supposed to have acted so distinguished a part, as Jesus and his apostles communicated no information respecting the supposed revolt in heaven, and the down fall of a number of its once holy and blessed inhabitants. The sacred writers go no further back than the Mosaic creation; but the popular doctrine of fallen Angels carries us back we know not how far, to scenes acted we know not were, in

which our race had no concern, and can have no interest. So far as the scriptures are concerned, the doctrine of fallen Angels is built on two detached passages which are capable of different interpretations, and upon a symbolical account in the Apocalypse.

*Devils.*—The word Devils occurs in the common translation of two passages in the Pentateuch, Lev. xvii. v. 7. They shall no more offer their sacrifices to Devils. The Hebrew word rendered Devils, in this place, means *goats* or *hairy animals*. (See Dr. Gill on the passage, and Bate's *Critica Hebræa*.) There is not the least reason to suppose that the Israelites ever sacrificed to apostate spirits. Moses refers to their having sacrificed to *hairy animals*, or their images, after the manner of the Egyptians, Deut. xxxii. v. 17. They sacrificed unto Devils, not to God; to Gods whom they knew not; to new Gods that came newly up. The word here translated Devils evidently refers to the idols of the Gentiles, Moses says nothing about apostate spirits; he explains himself by the expression, "new Gods that came newly up," which proves that he was speaking of the newly invented deities of the heathen; these were either the heavenly bodies, or dead heroes; for both were deified in the ancient world. Both Parkhurst and Bate suppose the great agents of nature, the heavens, are meant by the word translated Devils. On the whole it appears that the Devil, who makes so conspicuous a figure in the modern systems of religion, is not mentioned in the writings of Moses. For two thousand years, at least, mankind, were left in total ignorance of the existence of their supposed deadly foe.

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